

INFORMATION ABOUT HEPATITIS B VACCINE

The Disease

Hepatitis B is a viral infection caused by the hepatitis B virus (HBV). It ranges in severity from a mild illness, lasting a few days (acute) to a serious long-term (chronic) illness that can lead to liver disease or liver cancer. This condition is transmitted by contact with infectious blood and body fluids, sharing of contaminated needles used to inject drugs, or from an infected mother to her newborn. Thus, immunization against hepatitis B can prevent and also reduce sickness or death from chronic active hepatitis, cirrhosis, and liver cancer.

The Vaccine

Hepatitis B recombinant vaccine is derived from yeast by means of advanced biotechnology and it produces a protective antibody to hepatitis B. It has been extensively tested for safety. A high percentage of healthy people who receive two doses of vaccine and a booster achieve high levels of surface antibody (anti-HBs) and protection against hepatitis B. Persons with immune-system abnormalities, such as dialysis patients, have less response to the vaccine, but over half of those receiving it do develop antibodies. Full immunization requires three doses of vaccine over a six-month period, although some persons may not develop immunity even after three doses. There is no evidence that the vaccine has ever caused hepatitis B. However, persons who have been infected (incubation time of hepatitis B is six weeks to six months) with HBV prior to receiving the vaccine may go on to develop clinical hepatitis in spite of immunization. The duration of immunity is unknown at this time. The first two doses should be given one month apart, and the third dose five months after the second. The duration of vaccine-induced protection and the need for booster doses are not yet known.

Possible Vaccine Side Effects and Precautions

The incidence of side effects is very low. No serious side effects have been reported with the vaccine. A few persons experience tenderness and redness at the site of injection. Low-grade fever may occur. Rash, nausea, joint pain, and mild fatigue have also been reported. The possibility exists that more serious side effects may be identified with more extensive use.

PRECAUTIONS:

- Severe allergy to yeast would be contraindication for receiving the recombinant vaccine.
- PREGNANCY should not be considered a contraindication to vaccination of women who are otherwise candidates for receiving hepatitis B vaccine.
- Hemodialysis patients and other immunosuppressed persons require special dosage. Consultation with a physician is necessary.

CONSENT FORM

I have read the above statement about hepatitis B and the hepatitis B vaccine. I have had an opportunity to ask questions and understand the benefits and risks of hepatitis B vaccination. I understand that I must have **three** doses of vaccine to confer immunity. However, as with all medical treatment, there is no guarantee that I will become immune or that I will not experience an adverse side effect from the vaccine.

☐ I request that the hepatitis B recombinant vaccine be given to me.

(Signature)

(Date)

☐ I do not want to take the hepatitis B vaccine.

(Signature)

(Date)

Dose	Manufacturer/Lot Number/Expiration	Date/Site	Pt. Initials/Nurse Initials
Vaccine #1	_____	_____	_____
Vaccine #2	_____	_____	_____
Vaccine #3	_____	_____	_____